

## OPENING STATEMENT

By: Hon. John E. Colella, Family Support Magistrate  
To: Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee  
Re: Judicial Review Council (Appointment as Alternate Member)  
February 25, 2010

Good Afternoon Senator Looney, Representative Janowski, and distinguished Members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee. It has been my honor to serve the people of the State of CT as a Family Support Magistrate since April 2001. I currently sit in Hartford five days a week.

I am further honored to have been nominated by Governor Rell as an Alternate Member of the Judicial Review Council.

I was born and raised in Waterbury. I attended Bunker Hill grammar school and graduated from Sacred Heart High School. I put myself through 4 years of college at the University of Connecticut, including two years at the Waterbury Branch.

I also put myself through law school at Western New England in four years by attending evenings and summer sessions while working days. During my final two years of law school I worked as a courtroom clerk at Waterbury Superior Court. That experience was an excellent way to learn by daily observation the proper conduct of judges and lawyers.

Within a few months of graduation in 1979 I entered private practice in the Waterbury area until my appointment in 2001. I initially worked for about two years as an associate in a small Naugatuck firm, and then for about two years in a small Waterbury firm.

I opened my own solo practice in Waterbury in 1984. I remained a sole practitioner until closing my practice in 2001, except for a brief partnership arrangement one year. The main areas of my practice were real estate, probate and family law.

I lived primarily in Naugatuck from 1979 to 1992. I was very active in the Naugatuck Exchange Club for several years, serving a term as its President. I was a member of the Board of Directors of the Naugatuck Day Care Board for several years, serving a term as its President. I also served a short term as an Alternate on the Naugatuck Zoning Board of Appeals.

In 1991 I moved my law office to Middlebury, and about a year later I moved my home there. I became very active in the Middlebury Lions Club, and served a term as its President. In 2004 I moved to Cheshire, where I still reside.

I'm the proud father of two beautiful daughters. Amy is a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation UConn grad, and recently married. She is a social worker with the Department of Children and Families. Lauren is a senior at Joseph Foran High School in Milford. She also works part time as a lifeguard and swim instructor at the Milford Y.

Like most, I did not seek out this particular appointment. It is no fun to sit in judgment of one's colleagues. However, it is an absolutely necessary process, and I am prepared to be involved in that process.

My parents instilled in me a strong sense of responsibility. During the past nine years as a Family Support Magistrate I have made thousands of decisions, some of them

unpopular with at least one of the parties involved. These decisions are often made under stressful conditions, with high volume dockets, parties in difficult circumstances, their emotions running high, etc.

Ideally, I will never be called to serve on the Council because there will be no complaints filed against any of my fellow Family Support Magistrates. However, if and when called upon to do so, I am prepared to handle each matter professionally and appropriately.

I will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for your valuable time.